

an important general maxim to avoid such circumstances or such behaviour as appear to increase the child's fear and guilt about defaecatory processes, even if this means a long, patient waiting for the time when he can be clean; (c) *it* is wise to respect the individual phobias which some children spontaneously develop, for example, fear of using the pot or the w.c.—sometimes a fear of falling down the drain, or of the terrifying rush of the water, or of the helpless position in sitting down on the chamber pot. If these phobias develop, it means there is great dread on the part of the child, probably connected with some unconscious hostile phantasy, and attempts to ignore this dread and force the child to conform serve but to increase his fears. It is not necessary for the mother to know the nature of the phantasy, but it is advantageous for her not to treat the child as merely "naughty" or obstinate, but to recognise that he *is* afraid, and to find some way round. One common mistake is to leave the child on an uncomfortable vessel, without proper support, so that he has reason to fear falling over. Another is to stand over the child, urging him, and not giving him a moment's respite. The situation which enables one child to evacuate easily and regularly will not, however, be the same as suits another, and wise mothers and nurses know how to discover the circumstances which help each child most, and to find such a technique as will put him at ease.

In the nursery school one very often meets instances of children who show themselves bitterly ashamed of any loss of control of bladder or bowel, as well as of children who show open scorn for any fellow who makes such a mistake. The good nursery school teacher understands that the best help, whether to the child who

is at fault or the others who are contemptuous of his failing, is to show a cheerful sense of proportion, and take the attitude that this is just a temporary mistake, and that the child will soon be able to manage his affairs more successfully. She understands, too, that the child's confidence in himself is a very important factor in his success, and that helping him to gain actual skill, e.g. in unfastening of garments and other accessory processes, is far more valuable than merely urging him to be clean. She knows, too, that growing social confidence is a factor in the child's willingness to leave an entrancing game for the necessary purpose. Little children find it hard to